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**State Agricultural Development Board Approves \$35,000 for Monroe County High School Agriculture Department Greenhouse**

The Kentucky Agricultural Development Board voted today to approve a \$35,000 grant request submitted by the Monroe County High School Agriculture Department to establish a greenhouse for instruction in horticulture and floriculture. The application was reviewed by the Monroe County Agricultural Development Council and forwarded to the state board as a high priority item. Funds come from \$511,992 set aside for Monroe County in the Agricultural Development Fund established with half of Kentucky's tobacco settlement proceeds.

Governor Patton praised the Board's action to boost the efforts of Monroe County young people interested in agriculture.

"This action means that the young people of Monroe County will have expanded opportunities to learn about career options in agriculture other than tobacco. This is an investment in the future of Kentucky agriculture, the future of our rural communities, and in diversification efforts in one of our state's most progressive agricultural counties," said Governor Paul Patton.

The award was made as one of eleven projects approved by the Board during its meeting today. The Board approved a total of \$4,443,000 in state level projects, and \$403,600 in a variety of county-level programs, including the Monroe County High School Agriculture Department greenhouse.

"I know from experience the importance of high school agriculture programs to young people," Agriculture Commissioner Billy Ray Smith said. "This greenhouse will help educate students about a growing and promising segment of Kentucky agriculture."

"We are very excited! We've been trying to find funding for the construction of this greenhouse for four to five years and now, and because of the Ag Development Board's decision, it will become a reality," said Monroe County High School Agriculture Teacher Mitchell Cunningham.